

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 209714

TOSEC 26

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: AORG, UN,GW

SUBJ.: UN ADMINISTRATION: PROPOSED TRANSLATION OF
GERMAN DOCUMENTS IN UN

REF: USUN 3168

1. FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT ON USE OF GERMAN LANGUAGE IN
THE UN FROM AN UNCLEARED MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND FRG AMBASSADOR BERNDT
VON STADEN ON SEPT. 20. THE EXCERPT IS RELEVANT TO THE
SECRETARY'S LUNCHEON WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ON
SEPT. 24.

2. "AMBASSADOR VON STADEN THEN BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF
GERMAN IN THE UN. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE FRG, GDR AND
AUSTRIA HAD PROPOSED THE USE OF GERMAN IN A VERY MODEST
AND LIMITED WAY. THE THREE COUNTRIES WANT SOME DOCUMENTS
TRANSLATED INTO GERMAN AND MADE THEIR PROPOSAL IN ACCORD-
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ANCE WITH ARTICLE 57 OF THE PROCEDURAL CODE. HE

EMPHASIZED THAT THIS PROPOSAL IS NOT A FIRST STEP TOWARD MAKING GERMAN A FULL WORKING LANGUAGE IN THE UN. HE REFERRED TO THE USE OF ARABIC AND NOTED THAT THIS USE OF GERMAN WOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURES ALREADY ADOPTED IN THE UN. HE ALSO NOTED THE LIMITED COST, ESTIMATED AT \$500,000 A YEAR, AND THEN EMPHASIZED THE

POLITICAL IMPORTANCE TO THE FRG OF THIS RARE OPPORTUNITY TO COOPERATE WITH THE GDR. WITH REFERENCE TO COST, THE AMBASSADOR UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UN PAYING A SMALL PORTION SO THAT THE TRANSLATIONS WOULD BE OFFICIAL UN DOCUMENTS. HE ADDED THAT THE THREE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES PAY APPROXIMATELY 9 PERCENT OF THE UN BUDGET, WHICH IS A LARGER PERCENTAGE THAN ANY OTHER LANGUAGE GROUP WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CHARTER LANGUAGES. HE CONCLUDED BY POINTING TO THE INCREASED USE OF GERMAN IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES SUCH AS CSCE, MBFR, AS WELL AS REGULAR PROCEEDINGS OF THE EC.

"AMBASSADOR VON STADEN THEN REFERRED TO A RECENT POSITION TAKEN BY AMBASSADOR SCALI TO THE EFFECT THAT THE U.S. WOULD SUPPORT THE GERMAN PROPOSAL ONLY IF THE FRG, GDR AND AUSTRIA PAID THE FULL COST. HE ASKED IF THE U.S. COULD RE-EXAMINE ITS POSITION AND SUPPORT THE GERMAN PROPOSAL.

"THE DEPUTY SECRETARY REPLIED THAT WE WOULD BE GLAD TO TAKE THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS UNDER CONSIDERATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT WE DO NOT OPPOSE THE GERMAN LANGUAGE. WE DO OPPOSE PROLIFERATION OF LANGUAGES IN THE UN. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID THAT ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION WOULD BE FOR THE SPONSORING COUNTRIES TO PAY THE FULL COST ON THE ASSURANCE THAT THE TRANSLATIONS WOULD BE OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS OF THE UN.

"AMBASSADOR VON STADEN SAID THAT HE THOUGH THIS MATTER WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ON SEPT. 24." INGERSOLL

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